

Statistics

Population (2003)

North Carolina:	5,778,266	metro	(2.4% of total U.S. metro)
	<u>2,628,982</u>	non-metro	(5.3% of total U.S. non-metro)
	8,407,248	total	

United States:	241,395,996	metro
	<u>49,413,781</u>	non-metro
	290,809,777	total

Farm-Related Employment (2000)

North Carolina:	904,632 jobs	(18.4% of total North Carolina employment)
United States:	25,834,574 jobs	(15.6% of total U.S. employment)

Number of Farms (2002)

North Carolina:	53,930	(2.5% of total U.S. farms)
United States:	2,128,982	

Average Farm Size (2002)

North Carolina:	168 acres
United States:	441 acres

Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold (2002)

North Carolina:	\$7.0 billion
United States:	\$200.6 billion

Rank among all States in market value of agricultural products sold (2002): #8

Top 5 Agricultural Commodities (2002)

Commodity	Value of receipts (thousand \$)	Percent of U.S. value
Hogs	1,407,110	14.6
Broilers	1,367,472	10.2
Greenhouse/nursery	939,770	6.6
Tobacco	656,535	37.6
Turkeys	429,293	16.2

Value of Agricultural Products Sold Directly to Consumers (2002)

North Carolina: \$17.2 million
United States: \$812.2 million

Farmers Markets (2004)

North Carolina: 84
United States: 3,617

Market Value of Certified Organic Commodities (2002)*

North Carolina: \$5.4 million
United States: \$392.8 million

*(Data may not reflect actual industry growth after Oct. 2002 implementation of USDA National Organic Program.)

Certified Organic Acreage (2001)

North Carolina: 1,377 acres
United States: 2,343,857 acres

USDA-Accredited Organic Certifying Agents (2005)

Based in North Carolina: 1
Total: 96

Marketing Products and Services

Specific to North Carolina

AMS Participates in National Small Farm Conference

The 4th National Small Farm Conference was held in Greensboro in October 2005. AMS provided two presentations: "Farmers Markets: An Alternative Marketing Outlet for Small

Farmers” and “How to Start a Farmers Market,” as well as information regarding the National Organic Program’s activities. The conference is co-sponsored by AMS and other USDA agencies.

Study of Consumer Recognition of USDA Organic Seal

Two focus groups met in July 2005 in Raleigh to study consumer recognition of the USDA Organic seal. The focus groups were conducted by the California Institute of Rural Studies through a cooperative agreement with AMS as part of a larger effort to study consumer awareness and behavior in purchasing organic products. The Raleigh sessions follow sessions held in Des Moines, IA, in June, and precede upcoming sessions in Albuquerque, NM.

Greensboro Workshop Helps Minority Farmers

In February 2005, AMS and other USDA agencies held a training workshop to begin a new outreach program for minority farmers at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University in Greensboro. The workshop is the second activity for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by USDA and Marriott in March 2004. The first workshop was held at Tennessee State University in Nashville, TN, in January. This train-the-trainer workshop teaches outreach methods to leaders and trainers from many community-based organizations in the south. The program prepares minority farmers to expand their business capacity in order to sell their fruits and vegetables to Marriott.

Farm Marketing Success Story

With a \$25,000 grant from AMS’s Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDACS) in 2004 explored the potential market for Hispanic cheeses in the region, which has experienced rapid growth in the population of Mexican immigrants in recent years, creating a demand for specialty cheeses. Results indicate a significant opportunity for local dairies and food processors to tap into this new and growing market. NCDACS credits the grant with providing the impetus for what has become a statewide initiative to develop the farmstead dairy sector. The final report of the project can be found at [*The Market Potential for Hispanic Cheeses in Western North Carolina*](#).

AMS Donates Computer Equipment to North Carolina A&T

AMS transferred 11 surplus computer systems to North Carolina A&T University in 2004. The computers were used in A&T’s statewide Farmer Adopting Computer Training (FACT) outreach program. This project teaches small, limited-resource farmers to use computers. A recent North Carolina A&T survey found many small farmers’ records were kept on the dashboards of trucks, under truck seats, or in shoe boxes. Without accurate records of income and expenses, they are not able to obtain loans and legal settlements and effectively market their crops. Some farmers who expressed fear of computers prior to training have now purchased their own state-of-the art computers.

Participation in Direct Farm Marketing Conference

AMS helped sponsor and organize an informational meeting about the newly established Farmers Market Coalition (FMC) at the annual conference of the North American Direct Farm Marketing Association (NAFMDA), held in Charlotte in February 2003. The FMC represents the first national alliance of farmers market managers, association members, and industry supporters, and was established so that individuals involved in farmers markets had a nationwide resource to turn to for technical support on operational issues. The FMC maintains its own Web-based forum at *Farmers Market Coalition*.

Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) Grants

FSMIP provides matching funds to State Departments of Agriculture and other appropriate State agencies to assist in exploring new market opportunities for food and agricultural

products, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system.

- In 2002, \$25,000 was awarded to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, in cooperation with Western North Carolina Community Association Dairy Commission, Haywood Soil and Water Conservation District, and Haywood Economic Development Commission, to explore the potential for local dairy farmers to supply value-added farmstead products to retail customers in four major population centers of western Appalachia.

Regional Interest

North Carolina Participates in Food Policy Conference

North Carolina was a participant in the third annual Iowa Food Policy Conference at Drake University in Des Moines, IA, in September 2004. The theme of the conference was *The Role of Farmers Markets in America's Food System*. The conference consisted of workshops, panel discussions, and reports presented by representatives of a multi-state partnership, to provide consultation, training, and information for traditionally underserved farmers, with a focus on producers of specialty crops. Participants were from Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Utah, and Washington, as well as North Carolina.

General Interest

New Farm-to-School Marketing Publication

Eat Smart—Farm Fresh! A Guide to Buying and Serving Locally-Grown Produce in School Meals (PDF) was published in December 2005 by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of USDA. The publication, which helps school lunch programs find locally-grown produce, was developed by a multiagency task force that included an agricultural marketing specialist from AMS, four child nutrition specialists from FNS, and the Community Food Security Coalition, a non-profit organization.

Farm-to-School Report

How Local Farmers and School Food Service Buyers Are Building Alliances (PDF) helps small farmers and school food service buyers explore how they might establish direct marketing linkages.

Marketing via the Internet

How to Direct Market Farm Products on the Internet (PDF) is designed to help small/medium-sized agricultural producers better develop Internet-based sales transactions by recommending effective methods for reaching and retaining customers.

Trends in Farmers Markets

U.S. Farmers Markets—2000: A Study of Emerging Trends (PDF) assesses the importance of farmers markets as a distribution channel for farm products, documents the recent growth in farmers markets operations, and provides an updated profile of management, operations, and merchandising at farmers markets.

Market Research on Small Meat Processors

Enhancing Commercial Food Service Sales by Small Meat Processing Firms (PDF), published by AMS in cooperation with Texas A&M University, determines potential areas of competitive advantage for smaller scale meat manufacturing firms in supplying local restaurants and other local commercial food service accounts.